

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6075

As Passed Senate, March 13, 2007

Title: An act relating to increasing competitive bid limits for the purchase of materials, equipment, or supplies.

Brief Description: Increasing competitive bid limits for the purchase of materials, equipment, or supplies.

Sponsors: Senator Haugen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/27/07 [DP].
Passed Senate: 3/13/07, 46-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Oemig, Vice Chair; Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Benton, Kline, Pridemore and Swecker.

Staff: Amy Van Horn (786-7784)

Background: Counties must follow a certain bidding process when purchasing materials, equipment, or supplies, depending on the dollar value of the contract. For purchase contracts over \$25,000, counties must use a formal competitive bidding process. A solicitation for bids must be advertised in the official county newspaper; bids must be in writing and filed with the county clerk; and the contract must be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder.

For purchases between \$2,500 and \$25,000, counties may dispense with formal competitive bidding if they use an alternative uniform process. That process requires the county to obtain at least three bids from a list of qualified vendors, and to award the contract to the lowest responsible bidder.

For purchases under \$2,500, counties may dispense with formal competitive bidding upon the order of the county legislative authority.

Summary of Bill: Counties may dispense with formal competitive bidding upon the order of the county legislative authority for any purchase under \$5,000. Additionally, an incorrect reference in RCW 36.32.245(4) to a subsection in RCW 39.35A.020 is corrected.

Appropriation: None.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Raising this threshold is a no-brainer. It should be raised to \$10,000. This is a cost-saving for small jurisdictions. We want to find ways for them to deal with the many mandates the Legislature gives them. This allows them to get on the phone, call around, and get prices. They can deal with their local merchants. It's really unthinkable to imagine how they get competitive bids on all these small contracts. This limit was last raised in 1993. Inflation alone would justify this bill. One county reported that this would reduce their contracting paperwork by 35 percent. All of the counties in the state support this bill.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Haugen, prime sponsor; Kevin Hughes, Snohomish County; Jim Potts, citizen; Julie Murray, Washington State Association of Counties.